

# News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Wes Chapin

(805) 585-1845

wchap@parks.ca.gov

## Gaviota Boat Hoist Hours and Operation to Change

In an effort to improve visitor safety and reduce costly breakdowns at the boat hoist at Gaviota State Park, California State Parks will implement two significant changes in how it operates the popular facility beginning Friday, July 29, State Parks officials announced today.

Starting Friday, the boat hoist will be open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. The hoist will be closed to the public Mondays through Thursdays.

In addition, trained State Parks employees and volunteers will begin launching and retrieving visitors' vessels, a change from the previous practice that allowed visitors to operate the hoist without supervision.

The boat hoist at Gaviota State Park, located 33 miles west of Santa Barbara, is the only public boat launching facility between San Luis Obispo and Goleta and receives heavy use. But a series of breakdowns and accidents has troubled the facility for years.

A four-month study by Northeast Engineers & Consultants, Inc., hired by State Parks to evaluate the hoist operation, concluded that a major reason for past breakdowns and accidents was improper use of the hoist by visitors who were unfamiliar with how to operate it. Their

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report recommended that the State Parks department immediately begin using its employees and trained volunteers to monitor all hoist activities.

“Northeast Engineers and Consultants are experts in the field of marine engineering,” said Richard Rojas, District Superintendent for the Channel Coast District of California State Parks. “Their report made it plain that we needed to make changes in how we operate the hoist, and they also gave us a clear idea of what those changes should be.”

In addition to the operational changes that will start Friday, the NE&C report recommended improvements to the hoist itself, including 1) replacing the current hoist with one better suited to the harsh ocean conditions at the site, 2) retaining the current 2-ton weight limit on boats using the hoist, 3) reconfiguring the present electrical system to increase safety and reduce maintenance, and 4) installing a card reader and closed circuit surveillance system to protect the facility from unauthorized use and vandalism.

“We are working to obtain the funding to implement improvements to the hoist hardware, but that will take time,” Rojas said. “The operational changes we could make fairly quickly, and we are doing that. We expect these changes will mean a marked improvement in the safety of our visitors, and we are optimistic that they will solve the problem with the breakdowns, too.”

For current status of the Gaviota boat hoist, call 805-968-1033. To be added to a mailing list to receive updates on the Gaviota boat hoist, interested persons should send their first and last name to [gaviotahoistupdate@hotmail.com](mailto:gaviotahoistupdate@hotmail.com). Address and phone number are optional but helpful.

The complete NE & C Boat Launch and Retrieval Facility Assessment Report is available for viewing at [http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page\\_id=606](http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=606).

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